



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food and
Consumer
Service

Mountain
Plains
Region

1244 Speer Boulevard
Denver, CO
80204-2581

Reply to
Attn of:

SP-02-28

AUG 09 2002

Subject:

Verification of Free and Reduced Price Applications - Beyond
the December 15 Deadline for Completion

To:

STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS - Colorado ED, Iowa, Kansas,
(Special Nutrition Programs) Missouri ED, Montana OPI,
Nebraska, North Dakota,
South Dakota,
Utah and Wyoming

As you are aware, each year school officials in each school food authority (SFA) with approved free and reduced price applications for meal benefits must select a sample of those applications to be verified by the SFA. The deadline for completion of this required verification, as stated in 7 CFR 245.6a (a), is December 15 of each school year. It further states that if an extension to this deadline is necessary for a SFA, the request for extension must be approved in writing by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The purpose in granting such an extension is to give official sanction to the SFA while it works to complete the verification process beyond the deadline date.

However, SFAs and State agencies (SA) sometimes find that there is not sufficient time to request written FNS approval for an extension to the December 15 deadline before the deadline passes, or that the December 15 deadline already has passed without an extension being requested or granted. When the SA recognizes that there is no longer adequate time to receive approval for extension of the SFA's deadline, no extension should be requested from or can be granted by FNS. However, the SA must still require the SFA to complete verification as soon as reasonably possible.

When a SFA recognizes that the deadline will not be met, or has not been met, it should report the circumstances to the SA, which then should work with the SFA to develop a corrective action plan with a specific deadline for completion of verification. Similarly, if the SA discovers that the SFA is not going to meet, or has not met, the December 15 deadline (as during a CRE administrative review, per 7 CFR 210.18(h)(1)(iv)), the SA should work with the SFA to develop a corrective action plan with a specific deadline for completion. As necessary, the corrective action plan

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should be adequately documented. It should also address any systemic problems that could inhibit the SFA from completing verification by the deadline each school year.

If you have any questions regarding this guidance, please contact our office.



DARLENE SANCHEZ

Regional Director

Special Nutrition Programs